


MEMORANDUM

TO: District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment

FROM: Matt Jesick, Case Manager
 Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

DATE: September 22, 2015

SUBJECT: BZA Case 18801-A – Fort Lincoln Joshua Barney Modification

I. RECOMMENDATION

With regard to this proposal to modify the previous approval to increase the number of townhomes by 20 units, decrease the number of multifamily units by 20, and consolidate the multifamily buildings, the Office of Planning (OP) **can recommend approval** subject to receipt of updated plans with the following revisions as discussed by OP and the applicant:

- Creation of a visual focal point at the end of the main road in front of the multifamily building;
- Additional detail about the landscaping and materials used in front of the ground floor of the multifamily and used for the wall facing the streets in front of the building.

Approval would be pursuant to § 2516, Exceptions to Building Lot Control (1 principal structure permitted per record lot; multiple buildings proposed).

II. BACKGROUND

The Board approved the original application on July 29, 2014. The project included 103 rowhouses and three apartment buildings with 260 units, for a total of 363 units. After the application was approved the applicant received additional feedback from the community that replacing apartment building “C” with rowhouses facing Joshua Barney Drive would be more compatible with the existing rowhouses across the street. To address that concern, the applicant proposes to decrease the number of apartment units by 20 and consolidate all apartments in one building, while extending the rowhouses east to the east entrance and increasing their number by 20. The total number of units would remain the same, and the loading variance previously granted would no longer be needed.

III. LOCATION AND SITE DESCRIPTION

Location	Parcel of land between Joshua Barney Drive and “Eastern Avenue”
Legal Description	Square 4325, portions of Parcels 173/149 and 174/4
Ward and ANC	5, 5C

Lot Characteristics	Irregularly shaped, 22.7-acre property; Vacant; Heavily wooded throughout; Slopes up from Joshua Barney Drive then back down to a stream channel.
Zoning	Almost entirely R-5-D – Medium-high density multifamily residential; A small pocket of the property is zoned C-2-B.
Existing Development	None
Historic District	None
Adjacent Properties	Residential rowhouse to the south; age-restricted apartments to the west; garden-style apartments to the northwest.
Surrounding Neighborhood Character	Much of Fort Lincoln is developed with rowhouses, though it also has high-rise residential, garden apartments, a school, a rec center, an under-construction big-box retail area, and a beverage distribution warehouse.



IV. APPLICATION IN BRIEF

Applicant	Fort Lincoln Multifamily Housing, LLC and Fort Lincoln Joshua Barney Townhouse, LLC
Approved Proposal	Construct 103 rowhouses and 260 multifamily units in three buildings for a total of 363 units
Proposed Modified Proposal	Construct 123 rowhouses and 240 multifamily units in one building for a total of 363 units
Requested Relief	§ 2516 – Special exception for more than one principal building on a single record lot

V. ANALYSIS

The proposed modification would not substantially alter the OP analysis of the original application nor the facts upon which the Board based its original approval. While the multifamily buildings would be consolidated, their location would be very similar to the location of buildings A and B from the original approval. Likewise, the number of rowhouses would increase, but their layout would continue the pattern of rowhouses as seen in the original application, and would extend the street and alley network that was previously approved. The south side of the central street in the new development would now be fronted entirely with rowhouses, and additional rowhouses would face Joshua Barney Drive and the existing rowhouses on the south side of that street.

In the original application, the central street terminated at the main entrance to building B, which provided a visual resting point at the end of the street. In the proposed modification, the entrance to the unified building would move to the north. OP has discussed with the applicant and their architects ways to recreate a visual terminus for the street, and expects revised plans to be submitted prior to or at the public hearing. The terminus could include a set of stairs and enhanced landscaping and terraces at the end of the street. Please refer to Sheet A-6 of the plan set for the current rendering looking east down the main street toward the apartment building. Overall OP continues to support the architecture of the project. The newly proposed rowhouses would be compatible with the existing rowhouses on the south side of Joshua Barney Drive, though they would be separated by approximately 200 feet. The rowhouses would continue to be rear-loaded, enhancing the walkability of the project.

The proposed modified design would continue to meet all zoning requirements for height, yards, FAR, lot occupancy and parking. The original application required loading relief, but the consolidated apartment building would provide all required loading facilities. The project would also continue to meet Inclusionary Zoning (IZ), and the distribution of IZ units would be proportional between the multifamily building and the rowhouses.

In total, pending the forthcoming revised plans, the modified application would continue to meet the guidelines of § 2516, which seek to ensure compatibility with “the overall purpose and intent

of the Zoning Regulations, and other planning considerations for the area and the District of Columbia as a whole” (§ 2516.10).

VI. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

The Single Member District representative for this area has submitted with the application a letter of support for the project. As noted above, the proposed modification is a result of feedback obtained from nearby homeowners.